

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USBERL 00398 01 OF 02 180244Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 HA-05 CU-04 /082 W
-----085094 180427Z /70

R 171505Z FEB 78

FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6283
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USNATO

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 USBERLIN 0398

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PGOV WB
SUBJ: THREE-PARTY TALKS IN BERLIN

REFS: (A) USBERLIN 189; (B) USBERLIN 346

SUMMARY: BERLIN'S THREE POLITICAL PARTIES MET FEBRUARY 9 FOR THE FIRST ROUND OF A SERIES OF ALL-PARTY DISCUSSIONS. THE FIRST MEETING, RELUCTANTLY CALLED BY GOVERNING MAYOR STOBBE AFTER HEAVY POLITICAL PRESSURE HAD BEEN PUT ON HIM BY THE CDU AND FDP, PRODUCED AGREEMENT TO MEET AGAIN FEBRUARY 23 AND MARCH 2 TO DISCUSS COMMON POLICY GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH BASIC QUESTIONS ARISING IN THE AREA OF "BERLIN POLITIK."

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USBERL 00398 01 OF 02 180244Z

THE CDU'S INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN THESE TALKS STEMS FROM A MIXTURE OF CONCERN FOR THE CITY'S BEST INTERESTS AND THE DESIRE TO GAIN A POLITICAL TACTICAL ADVANTAGE AGAINST THE SPD. THE SPD IN TURN HAS SOUGHT TO MINIMIZE THE POLITICAL BENEFIT WHICH THREE-PARTY TALKS MIGHT GIVE THE CDU WHICH IS CURRENTLY AT A LOW POLITICAL EBB IN BERLIN. END SUMMARY.

1. SENIOR REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THREE POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN THE BERLIN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MET AT THE SENAT GUESTHOUSE FEBRUARY 9 AT THE INVITATION OF GOVERNING MAYOR DIETRICH STOBBE TO HOLD THE FIRST OF A SCHEDULED SERIES OF THREE-PARTY TALKS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST. (REFTEL A). THE IDEA OF HOLDING THREE-PARTY TALKS ON IMPORTANT BERLIN QUESTIONS IS NOT A NEW ONE. CONSULTATIONS OF THIS SORT WERE HELD AT THE TIME OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS (1969-71) TO KEEP ALL POLITICAL PARTIES INFORMED ON THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE IDEA WAS RAISED AGAIN IN 1973 BY THEN GOVERNING MAYOR SCHUETZ, BECAUSE THERE WAS SOME FEELING THAT THE SITUATION IN BERLIN WOULD BENEFIT FROM CLOSER COOPERATION AMONG THE PARTIES WHEN DEALING WITH INTERNATIONAL MATTERS AFFECTING BERLIN. AS A RESULT OF SOME COMPLICATED POLITICAL IN-FIGHTING IN THE SPD, HOWEVER, THE SCHUETZ PROPOSAL NEVER CAME TO FRUITION. THE IDEA WAS SUDDENLY RESURRECTED IN DECEMBER 1977 BY FDP HOUSE MEMBER AND FORMER SENATOR HERMANN OXFORT AND WAS QUICKLY PICKED UP BY THE BERLIN CDU LEADERSHIP WHICH SAW IN THE THREE-PARTY TALKS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN A VOICE IN BERLIN POLICY MAKING. GOVERNING MAYOR STOBBE INITIALLY OPPOSED HOLDING THREE-PARTY TALKS BECAUSE, AS HE SAID ON MORE THAN ONE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USBERL 00398 01 OF 02 180244Z

OCCASION IN PUBLIC, HE PERCEIVED NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AMONG THE THREE MAJOR BERLIN POLITICAL PARTIES ON QUESTIONS INVOLVING BERLIN STATUS OR ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC. ALTHOUGH STOBBE AND THE SPD OPPOSED THE TALKS, PUBLIC PRESSURE FROM THE FDP AND CDU ULTIMATELY FORCED HIM TO AGREE (REFTEL A).

2. THE FIRST MEETING, HELD FEBRUARY 9, WAS PRECEDED BY CONSIDERABLE PRESS FANFARE BUT ENDED ON A LESS THAN SATISFACTORY NOTE. FOLLOWING THE MEETING IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT ALL PARTIES HAD AGREED TO FOCUS DISCUSSIONS ON "QUESTIONS OF FUNDAMENTAL BERLIN POLICY." IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT ALL DELIBERATIONS WOULD BE CARRIED OUT IN A "DISPASSIONATE AND SUBSTANTIVE FASHION" AND THAT THEY WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THE TALKS THEMSELF WERE CONDUCTED IN A FRANK AND UN-EMOTIONAL ATMOSPHERE, CONFIDENTIALITY LASTED NO LONGER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 USBERL 00398 02 OF 02 180418Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 HA-05 CU-04 /082 W
-----086873 180430Z /70

R 171505Z FEB 78
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6284
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USNATO

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 2 OF 2 USBERLIN 0398

THAN THREE HOURS FOLLOWING THE FIRST MEETING. DURING
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DEBATE ON THE ISSUE OF THE
NATIONALSTIFTUNG (REFTEL B), CDU CAUCUS CHAIRMAN
HEINRICH LUMMER BROKE WITH THE ATMOSPHERE OF CORDIALITY
AND UNDERSTANDING WHICH HAD EXISTED IN THE THREE-PARTY
TALKS, AND DELIVERED A HEAVILY EMOTION-LADEN ATTACK
AGAINST CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND THE COALITION GOVERN-
MENT'S BERLIN POLICIES. STOBBS RESPONDED BY ANGRILY
REBUKING LUMMER FOR HAVING DRAGGED INTO THE OPEN A
SUBJECT WHICH HAD BEEN DISCUSSED CONFIDENTIALLY ONLY
HOURS BEFORE. STOBBE WARNED THE CDU DURING THE
DEBATE THAT HE WOULD BREAK OFF THE THREE-PARTY TALKS
IF THE CDU COULD NOT LIVE UP THE TERMS OF THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 USBERL 00398 02 OF 02 180418Z

AGREEMENT GOVERNING THE THREE-PARTY TALKS.

3. COMMENT: PRIOR TO FIRST OF THREE-PARTY TALKS, CDU PARTY CHAIRMAN PETER LORENZ TOLD MISOFF THAT CDU HOPED TO REACH AGREEMENT WITH FDP AND SPD ON THE INTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN FUNDAMENTAL SECTIONS OF THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. LORENZ EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO WORK OUT COMMON POLICIES FOR RESPONDING TO THE GDR AND SOVIETS WHEN THEY OPENLY ATTACKED THE FRG AND WEST BERLIN ON QA ISSUES OR WHEN THEY ASSUMED THREATENING POSTURES AGAINST THE CITY. LORENZ ALSO SAID HE HOPED THE THREE-PARTIES COULD REACH AGREEMENT ON MEANS FOR ASSISTING SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED INDUSTRIES IN THE CITY AS WELL AS A COMMON POLICY FOR ATTRACTING NEW BUSINESSES IN WEST BERLIN. FINALLY, LORENZ INDICATED THE CDU HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ADOPT A COMMON LINE WITH THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES FOR DEALING WITH PROBLEMS OF CRIME, INTERNAL SECURITY, AND A WHOLE COMPLEX OF ISSUES ARISING FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LARGE GASTARBEITER POPULATION IN BERLIN.

4. THE SPD ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS MADE CLEAR TO US THAT IT HAS BEEN SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE USEFULNESS OF THREE-PARTY TALKS FROM THE OUTSET. AT PRESENT, THE SPD IS RIDING HIGH IN THE CITY. THE MOST RECENT INFAS PUBLIC OPINION POLLS (UNPUBLISHED), SHOW STOBBE GARNERING A SIXTY PERCENT FAVORABILITY RATING, WHILE THE SPD WOULD TAKE FIFTY PERCENT OF THE VOTE (EXCLUDING UNDECIDED VOTERS) WERE AN ELECTION HELD THIS WEEK. THE CDU, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS SUPPORT OF ONLY TWENTY PERCENT OF THE DECIDED VOTERS AND THE FDP AROUND SEVEN PERCENT ACCORDING TO THE SAME INFAS POLL. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE SPD

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USBERL 00398 02 OF 02 180418Z

DOES NOT WANT TO WORK OUT WITH THE CDU COMMON POSITIONS ON QUESTIONS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE IN THE CITY SINCE THIS WOULD BENEFIT THE CDU'S PUBLIC IMAGE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE SPD LOOKS UPON THE THREE-PARTY TALKS IN TERMS OF DAMAGE-LIMITING OPERATION; THE GOVERNING MAYOR AND THE PARTY ARE SEEKING TO PLAY DOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TALKS AND RESTRICT THEIR TERMS OF REFERENCE IN ORDER TO HOLD THE OPPOSITION CDU AT ARMS' LENGTH POLITICALLY.

5. THE CDU TACTICS IN SEEKING THREE-PARTY TALKS ARE NOT BAD. IF THE CDU WERE TO SUCCEED IN EMBRACING THE GOVERNING SPD AND FDP PARTIES IN A POLITICAL BEAR HUG, IT MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONVINCE A LARGER NUMBER OF VOTERS THAT IT WARRANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT (1ST REGIERUNGSFAEHIG). THE SPD RECOGNIZES THIS DANGER AND IS SEEKING TO WARD OFF THE CDU'S POTENTIALLY THREATENING EMBRACE. THUS FAR, THE GOVERNING MAYOR

AND HIS PARTY HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL, BUT WE SUSPECT THE
ULTIMATE RESULT OF THE THREE-PARTY TALKS WILL BE TO
IMPROVE THE CDU'S POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE SPD. IT IS
UNLIKELY THE TALKS WILL LEAD TO ANY WIDESPREAD MUTUALITY
OF THOUGHT ON MANY ISSUES, MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR
THE CDU TO CLAIM THAT IT HAD ATTEMPTED TO WORK TO-
GETHER WITH THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF
THE ENTIRE CITY, BUT STOBBE AND THE SPD AND FDP HAD
REFUSED TO GO ALONG WITH ITS EFFORTS.GEORGE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 feb 1978
Decapton Date: 01 jan 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USBERL00398
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780075-0292
Format: TEL
From: USBERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780238/aaaabgj1.tel
Line Count: 233
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3af507d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 USBERLIN 189, 78 USBERLIN 346
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3551457
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THREE-PARTY TALKS IN BERLIN
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, WB
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3af507d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014